

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 292131

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TO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 292131

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR,UN,BY,GQ,US

SUBJECT: BURUNDI'S UN PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

REF: (A) BUJUMBURA 1081; (B) USUN 5715

1. WE ARE DISTURBED BY POSSIBILITY OF EX FOREIGN MINISTER SIMBANANIYE BEING APPOINTED BURUNDI'S NEW UN PERM REP. THE FACT THAT THIS APPOINTMENT WOULD REPRESENT ONE OF THE FIRST MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS BY THE NEW BURUNDIAN REGIME, MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO INTERVENE EFFECTIVELY WITHOUT DAMAGING OUR RAPPORT WITH THE NEW REGIME. HOWEVER, THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIMBANANIYE'S APPOINTMENT TO THE UN POST ARE GRAVE ENOUGH TO WARRANT SOME DISCREET EFFORTS TO DISCOURAGE PRESIDENT BAGAZA FROM CARRYING IT OUT. ANY IDEAS YOU MAY HAVE ON WHETHER AND HOW WE SHOULD PROCEED WOULD BE APPRECIATED. FIRST STEP, OF COURSE, IS TO TRY AND CONFIRM GRB'S INTENTIONS REGARDING THE ASSIGNMENT OF ITS UN PERM REP.

2. AT MINIMUM IT SEEMS TO US IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO SEIZE

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 292131

APPROPRIATE EARLY OCCASION TO EXPRESS OUR REGRET THAT

AMBASSADOR MIKANAGU IS BEING REPLACED, NOTING THAT HE HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE, OBJECTIVE SPOKESMAN FOR HIS GOVERNMENT AND CONTACT AND DIALOGUE BETWEEN OUR TWO MISSIONS HAVE INCREASED CONSIDERABLY. YOU COULD THEN EXPAND ON THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE UN POST HAS IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR

BILATERAL RELATIONS, GIVEN ITS VISIBILITY AND THE INCREASING ATTENTION PAID BY CONGRESS TO WHAT TRANSPIRES IN THE UN. IN CONCLUSION, YOU COULD EXPRESS A STRONG HOPE THAT WHOEVER IS APPOINTED IS SOMEONE WITH WHOM IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR USUN TO WORK CLOSELY, AS HAS BEEN THE CASE WITH AMBASSADOR MIKANAGU.

3. IT MAY BE POSSIBLE, IN THE COURSE OF YOUR DISCUSSION OF FUTURE BURUNDI AMBASSADOR TO UN, TO MAKE CLEAR OUR OPPOSITION TO APPOINTMENT OF SOMEONE WITH SIMBANANIYE'S REPUTATION FOR ANTI-AMERICANISM, WITHOUT MENTIONING SIMBANANIYE BY NAME. IF YOU FEEL THAT PLOY IS NOT TOO RISKY, WE COULD ALSO DISCUSS ISSUE IN A FRANKER, PERSONAL DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR NZEYIMANA, WHO APPEARS TO HAVE INFLUENCE AND TO BE SOMEONE WHO WILL APPRECIATE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACT OF SIMBANANIYE'S PRESENCE IN NEW YORK ON FULFILLMENT OF HIS OWN MISSION.

4. IN APPROACHING NZEYIMANA, WE MIGHT NOTE RUMORS FROM BURUNDI AND THE CONCERN WE HAVE THAT THE PROGRESS IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS NOT BE JEOPARDIZED BY THE APPOINTMENT OF A PERSON WITH WHOM WE FOUND IT SO DIFFICULT TO DEAL ON NON-CONFRONTATIONAL BASIS WHEN HE WAS FOREIGN MINISTER.

5. YOUR EARLY REACTION APPRECIATED, INCLUDING YOUR JUDGMENT AS TO WHETHER YOU CAN ALSO DISCUSS THIS ISSUE EFFECTIVELY AND DISCREETLY WITH SOME OF YOUR CONTACTS WHO ARE NON-OFFICEHOLDERS BUT CLOSE TO THE NEW REGIME. IF YOU HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH ABOVE APPROACH, YOU SHOULD MOVE QUICKLY TO TRY TO SCOTCH APPOINTMENT BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. ROBINSON

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